

UPDATE: TASK FORCE PELICAN

Tuesday - September 13, 2005

American Red Cross

- **Sheltering Operations**
 - o Since Hurricane Katrina made landfall, the Red Cross has **housed more than 207,000 survivors** providing nearly **1.94 million overnight stays** in **709 shelters** across **24 states** and the District of Columbia.
 - o On Sunday, Sept. 11, the Red Cross housed nearly **75,000 survivors in 445 shelters** across **19 states** and the District of Columbia.
- **Relief Workers**
 - o Nearly **74,000 Red Cross workers** from **all 50 states**, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have responded to Katrina.
 - o During this effort, the Red Cross has trained **an additional 63,000 people** in specialized disaster relief skills.
- **Feeding Operations**
 - o **ARC** serves approximately **500,000 meals** a day.
 - o To date, ARC has served more than **5.9 million meals** to victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- **Financial Assistance**
 - o To date, ARC has raised more than **\$578 million**
 - o Survivors can register for emergency financial assistance, 24 hours a day, by calling toll-free **1-800-975-7585**
 - o Due to the large number of survivors, phone lines may be overwhelmed in the first few days.
- **Reuniting Families**
 - o Persons looking for loved ones can call **1-877-LOVED 1S** (1-877-568-3317), or go to www.redcross.org and click on "Family Links Registry"
 - o More than **182,600 have been registered online** and more than **110,000 have called** the hotline.
- **Health & Preventative Care**
 - o Visit www.redcross.org or www.cdc.gov for information about health strategies and preventative measures for those in affected areas
- **Disaster Mental Health**
 - o To date, **more than 91,000 people** have received Red Cross Disaster Mental Health services.

Department of Health & Hospitals

- An updated number of fatalities has been announced at **279**.
 - This number will be updated as often as possible when deaths are determined to be storm-related.
- As a result of the storm, the **DHH/OPH Lab** in New Orleans is **closed indefinitely**.
 - Until further notice, all newborn screening (PKU) specimens should be sent to the OPH Laboratory in Shreveport.
- Physicians, nurses and other volunteers must already be licensed by the Louisiana Board of Medical Examiners **OR** must be credentialed by a specialized process through DHH.
 - Those interested are encouraged to log on to www.helpthemnow.net.
- **Med Job Louisiana** has expanded to provide free professional recruitment services to nurses, in addition to primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychiatrists and dentists.
 - Primary care providers can call **1-866-273-4999** or log on to www.medjoblouisiana.com to fill out an interview form.
 - Health care organizations with staffing needs can call the hotline to provide information about available practice opportunities.

Department of Social Services

- There are currently **57,865** displaced citizens in **346** Louisiana shelters.
 - Another **334** citizens are housed in **5** special needs shelters.
 - There are an additional **80,079** citizens in out-of-state shelters for a total of **138,278** citizens in shelters.
- The **Department of Social Services** is participating in daily strategy sessions with the **American Red Cross** and **FEMA** to develop a plan for transitional and long-term housing.
- The second phase of the **Disaster Food Stamp Program continues**, with a waiver from the federal government which allows recipients to purchase hot foods with their benefits.
 - Without this waiver, hot foods and hot food products are considered ineligible food items in the Food Stamp Program.

Department of Education

- State Superintendent of Education Cecil J. **Picard will brief the media** with Dr. Henry Johnson of the United States Department of Education
 - o Tuesday, September 13, 2005
 - o 3:30 p.m.
 - o State Office of Emergency Preparedness on Independence Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA.
- In addition to Picard and Johnson, Leland Wilson from FEMA and Art Jones from Homeland Security will also be in attendance.
- The topic of the briefing will be rebuilding Louisiana through education, and the joint efforts that are on-going between the Louisiana Department of Education, the United States Department of Education, FEMA and Homeland Security.

Department of Labor

- Louisiana Department of Labor has **re-opened job centers** in LaPlace and Covington.
- The Labor Department has **extended** the period to accept claims for Disaster Unemployment Assistance to **November 30, 2005**.
 - o The original 30-day filing deadline was October 7.
- The Labor Department has collected **119,000** unemployment claims in Louisiana.
 - o Another **60,000** have been collected in other states.

Department of Transportation & Development

- Secretary **Bradberry** & Federal Highway Administrator J. Richard **Capka will fly to New Orleans** today to assess progress of repairs of the Twin Span bridges and other critical infrastructures affected by Katrina
- Secretary Bradberry is also meeting with Mayor President Kip Holden to discuss continued efforts to ease traffic congestion in the Baton Rouge Area

Department of Environmental Quality

- Early **DEQ/EPA samples** from flood waters **available online**.
 - o <http://www.epa.gov/katrina/testresults/>
- **Household hazardous materials collections** scheduled for Sept. 10-17 in Mandeville – from hwy 190 to the Lake.
 - o For additional information, call **1-800-0401-1327**
 - o Examples of materials to be collected – batteries, electronics, paint, cleaning solvents and lawn and garden products.
- DEQ continues to look for sites in impacted parishes where hurricane-related debris can be burned.
- DEQ has added a hand-held Hawk camera to its toolbox.
 - o The Hawk is an infrared camera that is capable of seeing certain leaks that the naked eye can not see.

Department of Wildlife & Fisheries

- **Habitat Damage Assessment**
 - o The Fur and Refuge Division has been limited to aerial surveys in the hardest hit areas. Boat launch points are difficult to access in Plaquemines Parish area.
 - o Biologists from F&R will be in Delacroix area conducting ground surveys on marshlands conditions.
 - o The Inland Fisheries Division will conduct additional surveys in the Blind River and Lake Maurepas area to further document low water oxygen levels and potential areas of concern for possible fish kills. The Wildlife Division is still assessing storm damaged parishes to determine recommendations for hunting season adjustments that might be needed.
- **LDWF Special Events**
 - o The Department's National Hunting and Fishing Day events around the state will be staged as planned on Saturday, Sept. 24.
 - o Event locations are all outside of storm damaged areas and include Baton Rouge, Minden, Monroe and Woodworth.
 - o Discover Louisiana Hunting Weekend, scheduled for Nov. 25-27, will be available for in-state and out-of-state hunters as announced.
 - More details to follow.

Department of Natural Resources

- **Angelle reports on department's call to action since Katrina**
 - o DNR Secretary Scott Angelle flew over the impacted coastal areas struck by Katrina and reported to the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee in Washington, DC on September 7th.
 - o Secretary Angelle has said before in past testimony before U.S. House and Senate leaders that based on its energy producing value to the nation, acre for acre, Louisiana is the most valuable real-estate in the nation.
 - o He has also repeated the request for offshore oil and gas revenue to be shared at a 50/50 ratio for coastal producing states like Louisiana and Mississippi.
 - Revenue sharing financial assistance from a source not subject to annual appropriations would mean billions of dollars for coastal rebuilding and restoration.
- Before leaving for Washington, he said there were some **2,640 producing oil and gas** wells shut-in.
 - o He said that the state's estimated loss per day in royalty income alone was close to **\$900,000** based on figures from the DNR Office of Mineral Resources.
- Secretary Angelle said that he has worked very closely with the industry, particularly with Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association President B. Jim Porter, (a former DNR Secretary) and with LIOGA's (Louisiana Independent Oil and Gas Association) President Don Briggs to look at the affects of the storm on energy production.
- Beside 24/7 work by the agency's emergency preparedness officers at the OEP operations center, Angelle said many of his employees had been tasked to work with the state departments of Social Services, Transportation and Development, Environmental Quality, State Police and the Coast Guard to provide immediate services for rescue and for emergency safety measures.
- Angelle said that some **200-plus volunteers** from the department were working at various locations, including the LSU Fieldhouse in Baton Rouge, the Heiman Center in Lafayette, and at Nichols State University in Thibodaux, where shelters have been operating since the storm.
- Other assignments of the department have included getting needed medical supplies by boats to relief workers as well as working on emergency waivers for some coastal use permits to allow for restoration of energy infrastructure in the state.
- Angelle said today that he is working on a personal letter to oil and gas industry professionals to remind them that Katrina's negative impacts will not dampen the rebounding and recovery efforts that the agency and government has firmly pledged in the months and years ahead.

Department of Corrections

- The Department of Corrections and the Attorney General's Office continue discussions regarding processing issues for detainees arrested post-hurricane Katrina.
- Secretary Stalder met with Orleans Parish Sheriff Marlin Gusman and staff in New Orleans on Monday to begin to establish a timeline for return of inmates to Orleans.
 - o These are **very preliminary** discussions at this point.
- The Department moved **190 inmates** Monday to new locations within the state and will move more Tuesday as DOC attempts to equalize the burden of housing thousands of additional inmates in state and local facilities.
- Family members inquiring about an inmate's transfer location (those evacuated from Jefferson and Orleans parishes) may call the following numbers for more information:
 - o **(225) 342-5935 or (225) 342-3998**
- Those offenders under probation or parole supervision who were forced to evacuate due to Hurricane Katrina are asked to check-in with the Department immediately.
 - o Probation and Parole agents are manning the following phone lines:
 - **1-800-869-2909 or (225) 342-0921; 342-0923 or 342-0933**

Division of Administration

- As of Monday, September 12 there are **seven parishes** which are in **conditional reopening status**
- If circumstances allow, offices in these parishes may be reopened and state employees called back to work in accordance with Civil Service rules
 - o Those parishes include:
 - Lafourche
 - Livingston
 - St. Charles
 - St. John
 - St. Tammany
 - Tangipahoa
 - Washington
- Offices still **closed until further notice** include the **four parishes** which were hardest hit Hurricane Katrina.
 - o Those parishes include:
 - Jefferson
 - Orleans
 - Plaquemines
 - St. Bernard
- LeBlanc says that workers in these parishes may be called to work in alternate locations and that all state workers should report to work as directed by their supervisors.
- **Updates regarding the status of state offices will be issued periodically.**
 - o State employees should monitor local media and call the state office status hotline at 1-800-360-9660 or 225-342-0498.

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